



"DEATH TRAP!"

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE



12c

DEC.
NO. 207

BATMAN



DUSK IN GOTHAM CITY...THE BEGINNING OF A NIGHT THAT MAY WELL BE THE LAST NIGHT SEEN BY THE INHABITANTS OF THIS GREAT METROPOLIS...

CALLING ALL CARS! CALLING ALL CARS! CONDITIONS...RED! THE MAD BOMBER HAS DELIVERED A MID-NIGHT ULTIMATUM TO CITY HALL!

ALL POLICE ARE TO GIVE COMPLETE AID AND ASSISTANCE TO STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES...

BSSST! HEY...SONNY!



...IN THEIR SEARCH FOR THE BOMB, YOU WILL BE KEPT ADVISED ON ALL DEVELOPMENTS...

HOW'D YOU LIKE A NEW BOUNCY BALL?

GEE! I-I NEVER EXPECTED YOU WOULD...



FOR THEIR OWN PROTECTION, THE PUBLIC MUST NOT BECOME AWARE OF THIS IMPENDING PERIL!

THAT'LL SERVE HIM RIGHT! TH' LITTLE PUNK!

MUST BE SOME KINDA NUT... AFTER TH' WAY HE...



PANIC MUST BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS!

AW, WHO CARES NOW? LEAST I GOT ME A NEW BALL ALL MY OWN!



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BATMAN AND ROBIN...
RED ALERT! YOUR PRESENCE
URGENTLY REQUESTED AT CITY
HALL... TOP-ECHELON CONCLAVE
...ESSENTIAL YOU ATTEND!

KZOWIE!
LOOKA THAT
BOUNCE! MUST
BE A... SUPER-
BALL!

STORY BY:
FRANK ROBBINS

ART BY:
IRV NOVICK &
JOE GIELLA

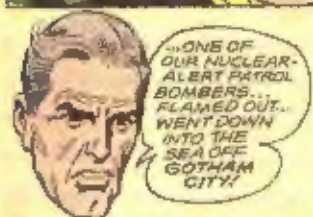
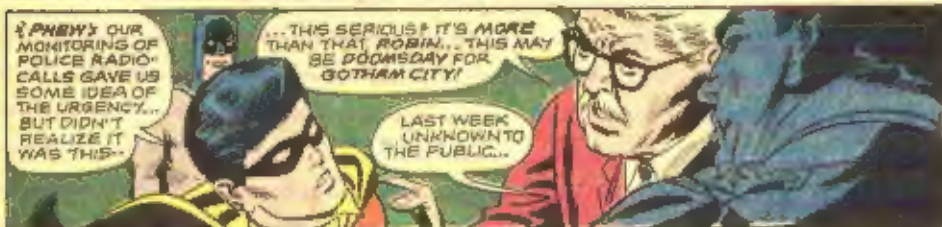
BATMAN

With **ROBIN** the Boy Wonder

FACE THEIR **GREATEST**
AND POSSIBLY **LAST**
CHALLENGE FROM...

The Doomsday Ball!

AS THE DYNAMIC DUO ENTERS THE TENSE AND TROUBLED MEETING ROOM...





SMALL ENOUGH TO BE TRANSPORTED...OR CARRIED...BY ONE MAN?

UNFORTUNATELY...JA!

BUT, GENERAL...IF THE PUBLIC WAS UNAWARE OF THIS INCIDENT, HOW COULD ANYONE?

ONLY IF THAT "HE" WERE BRILLIANT ENOUGH TO CRACK OUR CODED RADIO-TRANSMISSIONS! AND BEAT US TO THE ACCIDENT SCENE...



AND THEN THE DELIVERY OF THIS TAPE TO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE...LISTEN!

UNLESS TEN MILLION DOLLARS IS READY FOR DELIVERY TO ME BY 11:30 TONIGHT...I WILL BLOW UP ALL OF GOTHAM CITY AT MIDNIGHT! FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS WILL FOLLOW...



NOW! SOUNDS...FORGIVE ME, BATMAN...BATTY ENOUGH TO BE FOR REAL!

MAYBE ROBIN...BUT IT COULD ALSO BE A MAD HOAX!

THESE GADGETS ARE ALWAYS ATTACHED TO OUR H-STUFF...JUST IN CASE...



THEN...IT'S NO HOAX! IT'S A MILLION-TO-ONE CHANCE IN A CITY THIS SIZE THAT YOU'LL EVER FIND...

WOULDN'T IT BE WISER TO EVACUATE?


EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE...IN SIX HOURS! OUR BEST CIVIL-DEFENSE PLANS CALL FOR A MINIMUM OF TWENTY-FOUR HOURS! NO...WE MUST BE PREPARED TO PAY...UNLESS-



GENTLEMEN, YOU CAN CONTINUE YOUR CITY-WIDE SEARCH FOR THE BOMB, BUT...

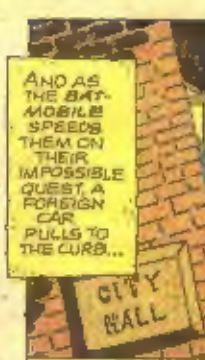
THERE'S ONLY ONE CHANCE TO NIP THIS IN THE BUD--FIND THE MAD BOMBER! ROBIN AND I WILL TAKE THAT CHORE...

...ALONG WITH THIS TAPE!




HOW CAN
THAT TAPE HELP
US FIND THAT
BATTY BLACK-
MAILER,
BATMAN?

HE MAY
NOT BE
NUTTY, ROBIN...
BUT A COLD,
CALCULATING
CRIMINAL,
WHOSE
VOICE
MIGHT BE
RECOGNIZ-
ABLE TO
SOMEONE IN
GOTHAM
CITY!




AND AS
THE BAT-
MOBILE
SPEEDS
THEM ON
THEIR
IMPOSSIBLE
QUEST, A
FOREIGN
CAR
PULLS TO
THE CURB...




WHERE DO
WE START?

AT THE LAST PLACE
THE POLICE WOULD
LOOK, ROBIN...

...AND A SHADOWY FIGURE HURRIES AWAY...



...THE HEAD-
QUARTERS OF
GOTHAM'S
CRIME
SYNDICATE!



MINUTES LATER... AT THE
BRILL BUILDINGS...

PRETTY
FANCY COMMAND-
POST FOR
GOTHAM'S WORST,
BATMAN!

AND A CRYING
SHAME, ROBIN!
DESPITE OUR BEST
EFFORTS, BIG BRILL
CONTINUES TO LOOT
AND VICTIMIZE
THIS CITY!




AND YOU
EXPECT
TO GET HIS
CO-OPERA-
TION?

IT'S CO-OPERATE...
OR PERISH! IN
HIS OWN EVIL
WAY... BRILL
HAS A BIG STAKE
IN THE SURVIVAL
OF GOTHAM!

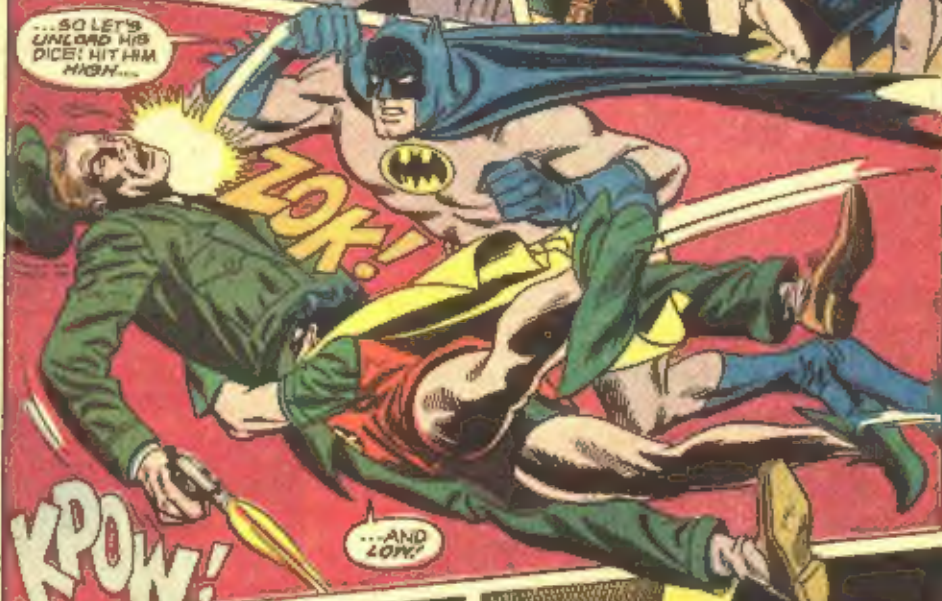
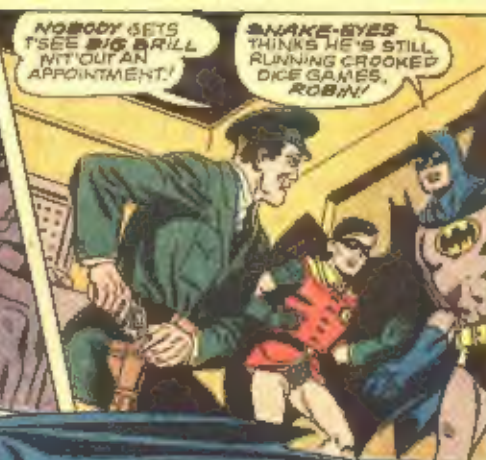
WHO
Y'WANT
T'SEE,
HUH?

THE BIG MAN
YOU'RE FRONTING
FOR, SNAKE-BYES!
ANNOUNCE US!



YE-AH, BOSS...
I WOULDN'T
BELIEVE IT EITHER
-- IF I DIDN'T
SEE IT!

T'ROW 'N'
BUNK OUT!



Captain Action[®] and Action Boy[®] meet **DR. EVIL[™]**

I... I CAN'T MOVE! WHO ARE YOU?

I AM DR. EVIL! AT LAST... YOU'RE IN MY GRASP... HEH... HEH!

HA! I HAVE IONIZED YOU... NOW MY THOUGHT-SENSOR WILL CONTROL YOUR MIND!

WHO WILL SAVE CAPTAIN ACTION NOW...??

ACTION BOY!

MY REDUCER WILL FREEZE YOU, ACTION BOY!

MY RAY-GUN IS STRONGER!

THANKS, ACTION BOY!

I'M GLAD I WAS IN TIME TO FOIL DR. EVIL!

THERE'S MORE ACTION AHEAD WHEN YOU ACT OUT YOUR OWN CAPTAIN ACTION ADVENTURES!

GET DR. EVIL... ALIEN FROM ALPHA CENTURA! HE COMES WITH DISGUISES TO HIDE HIS EVIL DEEDS... HE COMES WITH EVIL OUTFIT AND EVIL, EVIL THINGS!



GET CAPTAIN ACTION... GET HIS CRIME-FIGHTING ACCESSORIES.



ACTION BOY COMES WITH HELMET, KNIFE, RAY GUN AND PANTHER.



GET ALL THE ACTION WITH CAPTAIN ACTION, ACTION BOY, AND DR. EVIL! THEY'RE

IDEAL

AND ON THE PENTHOUSE FLOOR...



AND AS THE "LAST EXIT" IS REACHED...



AND AS THE DOORS SPRING OPEN...



IS THE FATE THAT BATMAN AND ROBIN HAVE MEY MORE MERCIFUL THAN THAT AWAITING GOTHAM CITY? WITH BATED BREATH WE PAUSE... AND AWAIT THE ANSWER ON THE NEXT PAGE FOLLOWING!



OCTOBER, 1988

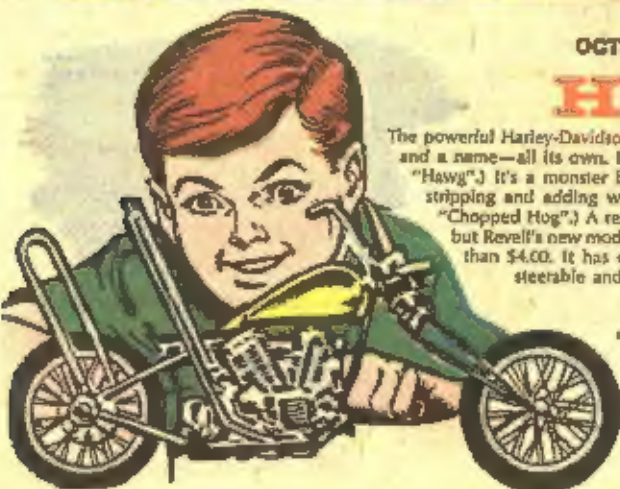
HOG

The powerful Harley-Davidson is a motorcycle with a personality—and a name—all its own. It's known as the "Hog". (Pronounced "Hawg") It's a monster bike...even when it's customized by stripping and adding wild new parts. (Then it's known as a "Chopped Hog".) A real Chopped Hog can cost over \$2,000, but Revell's new model of this colorful motorcycle costs less than \$4.00. It has colored, clear and chrome parts, plus steerable and moveable wheels. And building one can be a moving experience.

For a catalog of 250 Revell models, send 25¢ to: Revell, Inc., 4116 Glenview Avenue, Venice, California 90291.

Model
of the
Month

Harley-Davidson
"Chopped Hog"



BURSTING IN, THE GUNMEN FIND THE CAB...



EMPTY!
HOW--

BUT BEFORE AN ANSWER CAN BE FOUND... THE ELEVATOR DOORS SLAM SHUT--THE CAB DROPS!



HEY--!
WHAT GIVES--?

AND AS, SUDDENLY, THE CAB JOLTS TO A BONE-JARRING HALT... ONE FLIGHT LOWER...



OOOF!

WHILE ABOVE THEM, ON TOP OF THE CAB...



LUCKY WE ANTICIPATED THIS, BATMAN--AND CLIMBED OUT THE TOP HATCH!

AND EVEN LUCKIER THE CONTROL-CABLE COUPLINGS WERE ACCESSIBLE UP HERE... SO I COULD GAIN MANUAL CONTROL OF THE ELEVATOR!

THREE DOWN... AND HOW MANY MORE TO GO? GOT TO GET THROUGH TO BRILL...



THAT DOORWAY... LEADING OUT TO THE PENTHOUSE ROOF GARDEN!

BUT AS THEY PASS A BANK OF HIDDEN ELECTRIC EYES...



THOSE DOORS--!

WE MUST'VE TRIPPED SOME-- UNSEEN... ALARM BARRIER!

CONTINUED ON 2 SPECIAL EDITIONS

WE WANT YOU TO
BABY-SIT...
WITH THE
WORLD'S
MIGHTIEST
TOT...

SUPER BABY!



JUST
SIT
DOWN...
AND
READ
THIS
LATEST
GIANT.

EXTRA

ON
SALE
OCT 15

AND AS THEY TRY TO STEM THE
INEVITABLE DOWNWARD MOVE-
MENT OF THE STEEL DOORS

WE'RE
WALLED
IN

HELPLESS
WHERE SOME-
WHERE OUT
THERE A BOMB
TICKS AWAY
THAT CAN DESTROY
EVERYBODY!

INCLUDING
THAT FATHEAD
BIG BRILL!
AND ALL WE
WANT TO DO
IS JUST
TALK
TO HIM.

WE MAY
NEVER GET
A WORD IN
EDGEWISE,
ROBIN.

LOOK!

THERE'S
NO WAY
OUT
WE'RE
GONNA
DROWN

IF SOM
CHANCE GOT TO
WORK FAST

WHILE ALL
THE AIR YOU CAN
ROBIN HOLD
IT WHEN THE
WATER TAKES
OVER

IN BRIEF
INSTANTS THEIR
AIR SUPPLY
IS SNUFFED
OUT LIKE A
CANDLE! UNDERWATER
BATMAN
FEVERISHLY
TAKES AN
OBJECT
FROM HIS
UTILITY
BELT

I JUST HOPE
THE WATER HASN'T
"SHORTED OUT" MY
MINI-LASER TORCH!

THE POWERFUL RUBY LASER SPUTTERS
TO LIFE. JET'S PENCIL THIN STREAM
OF COHERENT LIGHT AGAINST THE
HEAVY STEEL DOOR

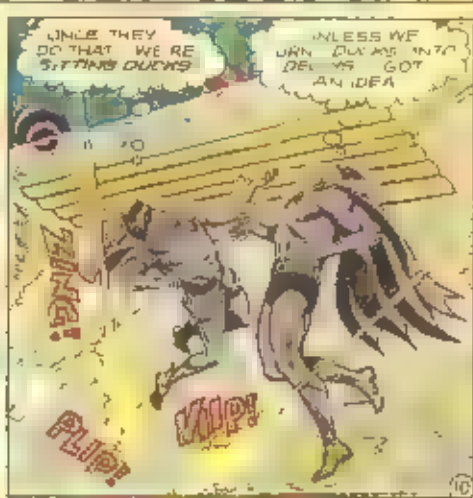
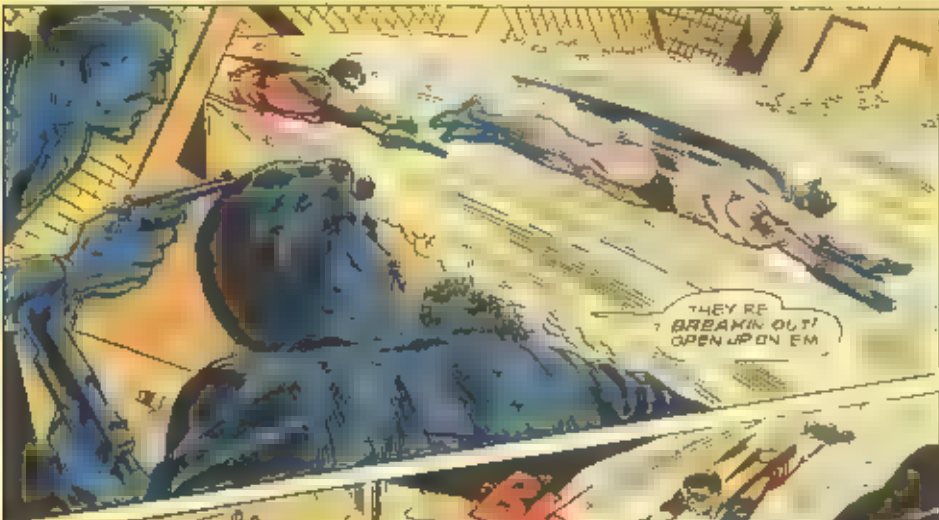
SLIT

QUESTION OF
WHICH GIVES OUT
FIRST OUR BREATH
OR THIS BARRIER

MOMENTS LATER

WAAAAHHH!

AS THE DYNAMIC DUO IS JETTED OUT UNDER THE HIGH PRESSURE OF THE "DOWNER" LASERWATER



BUT FIRST WE
NEED A SMOKE
SCREEN!

I'LL SIGNAL
ROBIN TO
TAKE SOME
OF THESE
SMOKE
CAPSULES,
THEN.

WHEN THE POOL LIGHTS GO ON

W. WHAT?
FOG?

IN A
POOL?

SUDDENLY
FROM OUT OF
THE MIST
A COUNTER-
ATTACK WITH
BEACHBALLS

WHERE
ARE THEY?
BLAST 'EM!

ZOK!

WHILE
UNDER THE
COVERING
SMOKE SCREEN.

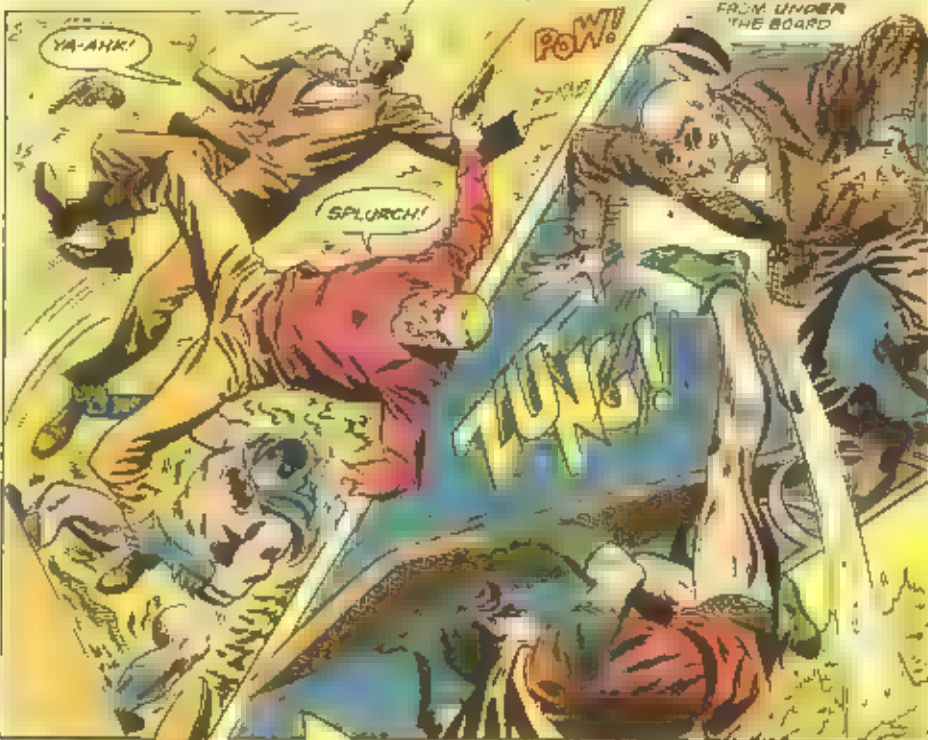
THESE BABIES
GO LIKE JET
PROPELLED WHEN
YOU RELEASE THE AIR
VALVE!

POFT!

AND WE'D
BEST BE GO-
ING NOW
BEFORE WE
LOSE THIS GAME
OF WATER
POLO!

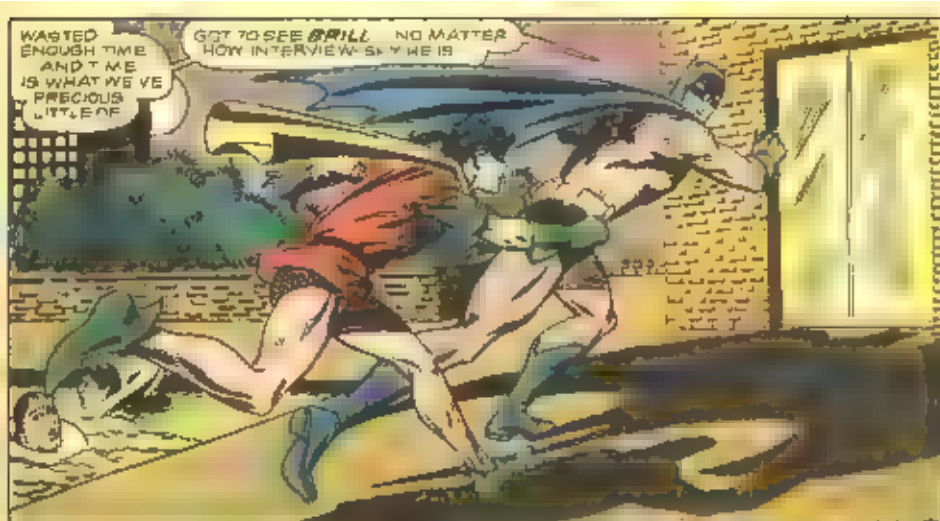
FOLLOWING UP HIS BEACHBALL BARRAGE THE CAPED CRUSADER
LEAPS UP FOR A TWO-HANDED CATCH

WHILE ROBIN DOES A
REVERSE HALF CANNON
FROM UNDER
THE BOARD



WASTED
ENOUGH TIME
AND T ME
IS WHAT WE VE
PRECIOUS
LITTLE OF

GO TO SEE BRILL NO MATTER
HOW INTERVIEW-SKY HE IS



MOMENTS
LATER, AS
THE GOTHAM
GANG
BUSTERS
BREAK INTO
THE INNER
SANCTUM

BATMAN
AND ROBIN!
HOW IN BLAZES
DID YOU

WE JUST
TOOK OUT
SOME MINOR
INTER-
FERENCE!

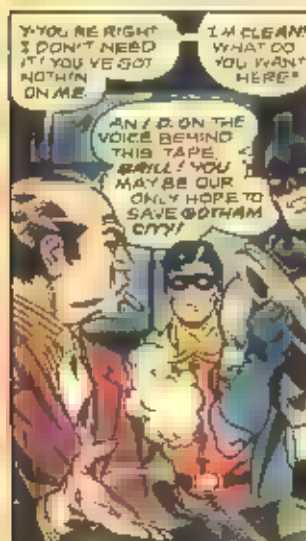
ROBIN,
DON'T
REACH
FOR THAT
GUN



YOU'RE RIGHT
I DON'T NEED
IT! YOU'VE GOT
NOTHING
ON ME

I'M CLEAN!
WHAT DO
YOU WANT
HERE?

AND DON THE
VOICE BEHIND
THIS TAPE
BRILL! YOU
MAYBE OUR
ONLY HOPE TO
SAVE GOTHAM
CITY!



ME? SAVE HAN?
GOTHAM? THAT'S A
TWIST ALL
RIGHT

BL
THE "TWIST"
THAT MAY DESTROY
T IS ON THIS TAPE!

I DON'T
DIS BUT
BE MY
GUEST
FOR A
PLAY
BACK



I WILL BLOW
UP ALL OF GOTHAM
CITY AT MIDNIGHT!
FURTHER INSTRU

TEN
MILLION
RANSOM
MAKES
ME LOOK
LIKE A TIN HORN
CHISELER WHO
'S THIS SPORT
ANYWAY?

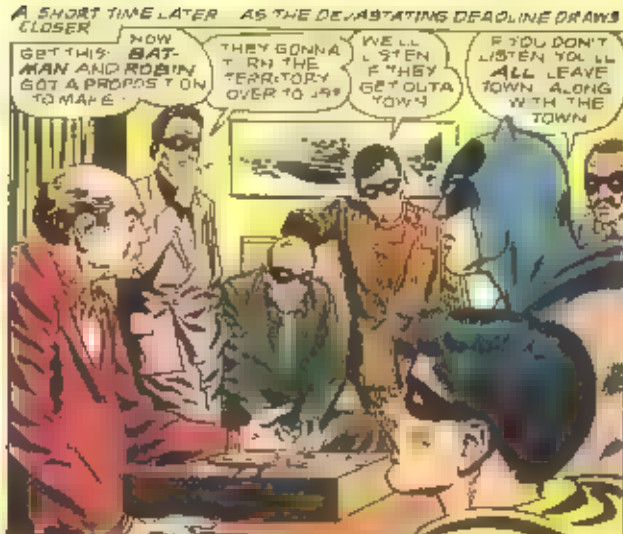
THAT'S
WHAT WE
HOPED YOU'D
KNOW





NEVER HEARD THE CREEPY VOICE AND IT'S NONE OF MY BOYS BUT THEY COVER THE CITY MAY BE ONE OF THEM MIGHT.

ALSO WHAT I HOPED YOU'D SAY! CAN YOU GET YOUR DISTRICT CAPTAINS HERE FAST?



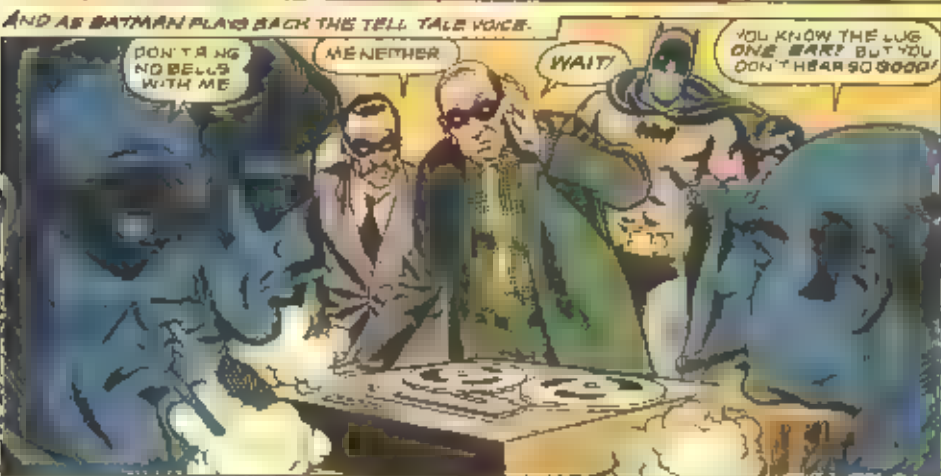
A SHORT TIME LATER AS THE DEJAVUING DEADLINE NOISES CLOSER

GET THIS! NOW BAT-MAN AND ROBIN GOT A PROPOSITION TO MAKE

THEY GONNA T RN THE TERRITORY OVER TO JAP

WE'LL STEN F THEY GET OUTA TOWN

IF YOU DON'T LISTEN YOU'LL ALL LEAVE TOWN ALONG WITH THE TOWN



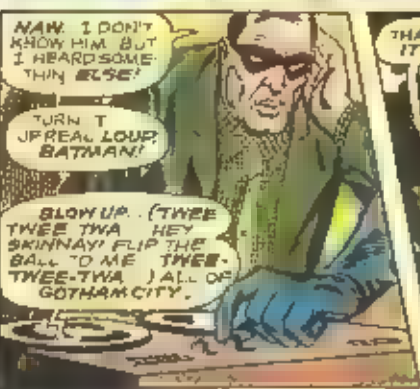
AND AS BATMAN PLAYS BACK THE TELL TALE VOICE.

DON'T RING NO BELLS WITH ME

NENETHER

WAIT!

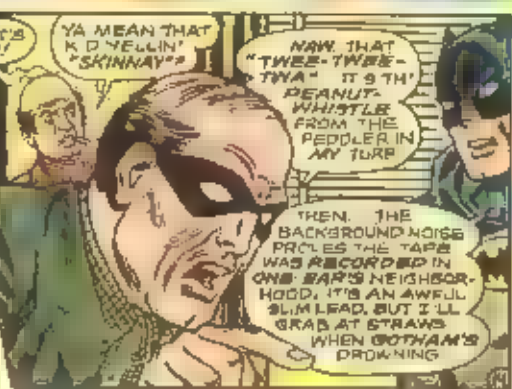
YOU KNOW THE LUG ONE EAR? BUT YOU DON'T HEAR SO GOOD!



NOW I DON'T KNOW HIM BUT I HEARD SOME THIN ELSE!

TURN T UP REAL LOUD BATMAN!

BLOW UP (TWEET TWEET TWA HEY SKINNAY! FLIP THE BALL TO ME TWEET TWEET TWA) ALL OF GOTHAM CITY.



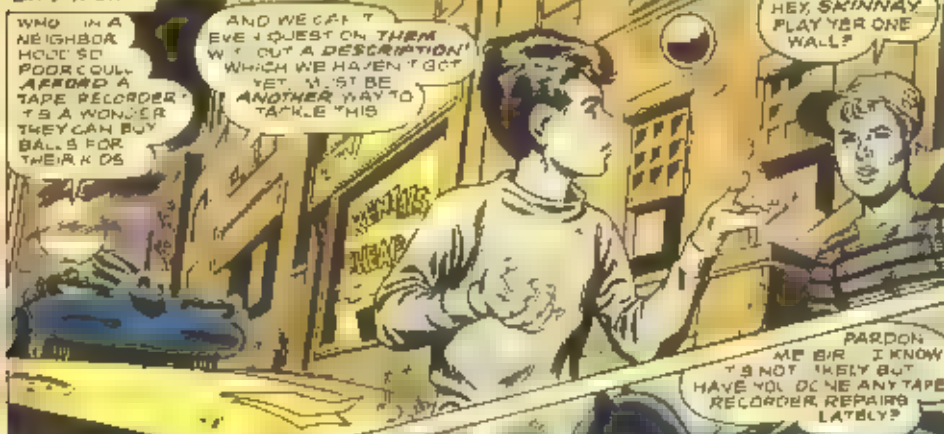
THAT'S IT!

YA MEAN THAT K'D YELLIN' "SKINNAY"?

NOW THAT "TWEET-TWEET TWA" IT'S TH' PEANUT WHISTLE FROM THE PEDDLER IN MY TURT

THEN THE BACKGROUND NOISE PROVES THE TAPE WAS RECORDED IN ONE BAR'S NEIGHBORHOOD. IT'S AN AWFUL SLIM LEAD, BUT I'LL GRAB AT STRAWS WHEN GOTHAM'S DROWNING

A MAD RACE AGAINST THE CLOCK BRINGS BATMAN AND ROBIN TO ONE EAR'S RUN-DOWN BAL WOK



WHO IN A NEIGHBORHOOD SO POOR COULD AFFORD A TAPE RECORDER? IS A WONDER THEY CAN BUY BATTERIES FOR THEIR KIDS

AND WE CAN'T EYE QUEST ON THEM WE'VE GOT A DESCRIPTION WHICH WE HAVEN'T GOT YET. MUST BE ANOTHER WAY TO TACKLE THIS

HEY, SKINNY! PLAY YER ONE WALLS!

PARDON ME SIR, I KNOW IT'S NOT LIKELY BUT HAVE YOU DONE ANY TAPE RECORDER REPAIRS LATELY?



ON A FAR-OUT HUNCH THE CAPED CRUSADER ENTERS A TV REPAIR SHOP



THREE YEARS AGO MY RADAR JUMPLER REPAIR SPACE ELECTRONIC MICROWAVE TRANSMISSION BAND I GOT STUCK IN THIS HOLE TV TRANSISTOR KIDDIE RECORD PLAYERS

LAST WEEK AM I THIS LOCAL TRAIL SENT BERTRAM SMITH BOARDS OVER AT MRS OF WAIS BRINGS IN



AN HONEST TO GOODNESS LIVE MACHINE! IT WAS DAMAGED BY SOME KID'S BALL

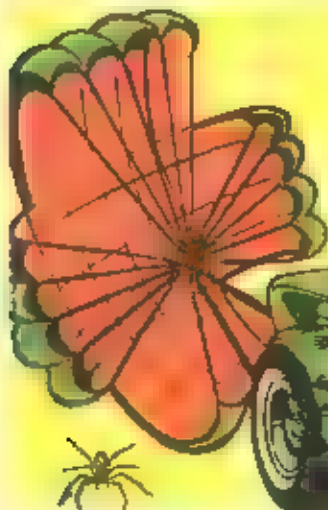
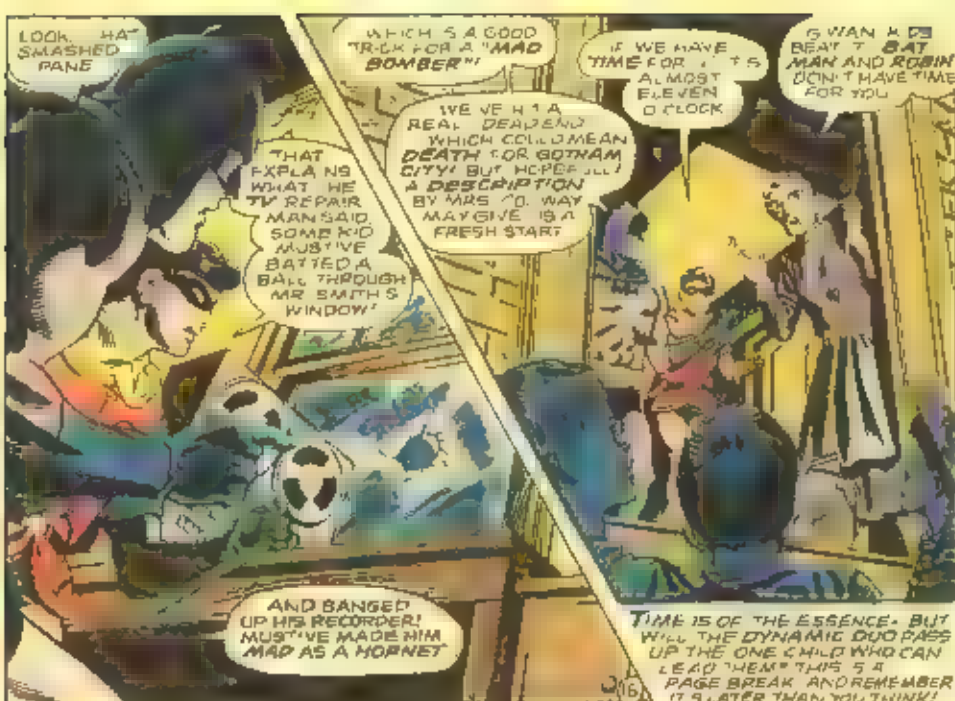
TILLIE CONWAY'S PLACE WE ONCE CAME OUT OF A MUGGING HERE ROBIN



MOMENTS LATER

APARTMENT 2-B YOU SAY MRS CONWAY?

YES, SIR! BUT HE'S SUCH A QUIET POLITE GENTLEMAN



It's the t'rantula

WITH BLOSSOMED BRAKE CHUTE

Get This Screaming Monster Dragster Ready to Jump All Competition

Exciting New Kit by Monogram

Only \$2



It's hard to believe, even when you see it. But the monster is here.

Long low and mean-looking slimy green body. Great big Ford engine with GMC muffler. Headers that fan out like a giant black spider's legs. Wide Goodyear slicks on rear, with lowered fenders which permit rubber

dust smoke and "stuff" to escape. Detailed interior.

Makes the t'rantula with chute closed or open. Chute pack and four pane blossomed chute both included in kit along with 1 1/2 inch molded tarantula, the giant spider and decals.

Get a t'rantula now at your favorite store.



Monogram Models, Inc.,
Meriden, Conn., U.S.A.



SHIRT
RUDDY
COMPLEXION
NOT MUCH
TO GO ON
BUT

HEY
BATMAN.
WHAT
CR ME
YOU SOLVIN
HUP?

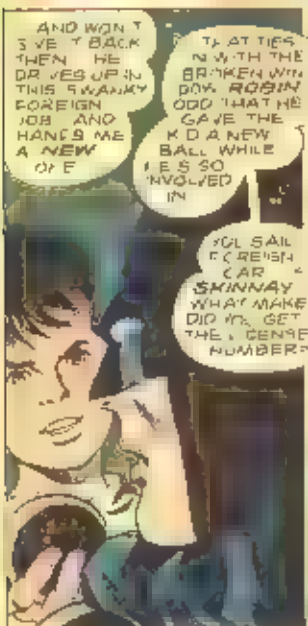
NONE SON
IF WE DON'T
OCATE HE
MR SM TH
WHO BOARDED
HERE



YA MEAN OLD
MEAN MOUTH?
MAYBE YA
BE' TER ASK
SKINNAY
HE KNEW H M
RE AL GOOD

WHEN WHEN
DID YOU SEE
HIM LAST,
SKINNAY?

WHEN WHEN
GIMME THIS
BALL ABOUT
TWO HOURS
AGO'S IRE A
KOOKY CAT
GRABBS MY
BALL WHEN
I BLUST HIS
WINDOW



AND WON'T
SVE T BACK
THEN HE
DR VES UP IN
THIS SWANKY
FOREIGN
JOB AND
HANDS ME
A NEW
ONE

THAT TIES
N WITH THE
BROKEN WIND
DOX ROBIN
ODD THAT HE
GAVE THE
KID A NEW
BALL WHILE
I E S SO
INVOLVED
IN

YOU SAIL
TO RENISH
CAR
SKINNAY
WHAT MAKE
DID IN GET
THE GENSE
NUMBER?



SE AH FRASCATI TOURIN
BY RED?
LGE SE
G-40077

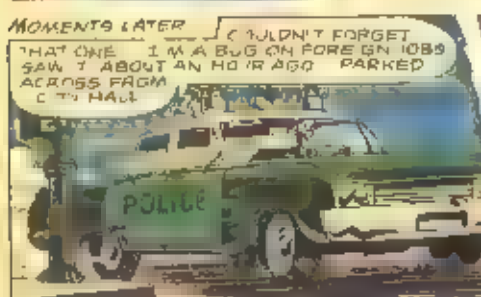
THANKS NOW WE'VE
GOT A SOLID LEAD

SKINNAY!
YOU COME
UP TO BED
RIGHT AWAY.
AND HOW
MANY TIMES DID I TEL YOU
NO TALKING TO STRANGERS?



SO NEAR AND YET SO FAR
ARE THE CRIME CRUSADERS
OFF IN A FALSE LEAD!

CALLING ALL CARS
BE ON LOOKOUT FOR
AR OF FOLLOWING
DESCRIPTION IF SEEN
CONTACT BATMAN AND
ROBIN IMMEDIATELY!



MOMENTS LATER
THAT ONE I'M A BUG ON FOREGN JOBS
SAW T ABOUT AN HOUR AGO PARKED
ACROSS FROM
C TO HALL



BUT I'M NOT ON
PICKETING DUTY
SO I DIDN'T

WHERE ELSE WOULD
A MAD MIND
PARK IT?

SECONDS LATER ACROSS FROM CITY HALL.

GONE!

NOT NECESSARILY BATMAN! LOOK.

ANOTHER DEAD END!

TOW-AWAY ZONE
NO PARKING AT ANYTIME

I WONDER HAS THE MAD BOMBER FINALLY MADE A MISTAKE?

WE'VE GOT ONE HOUR LEFT!

AFTER A MAD DASH TO THE CITY TOW-AWAY LOT

THAT'S T.S.M. RECALYD YOUR CALL TO THE ARMY NUCLEAR BOMB SQUAD. THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY.

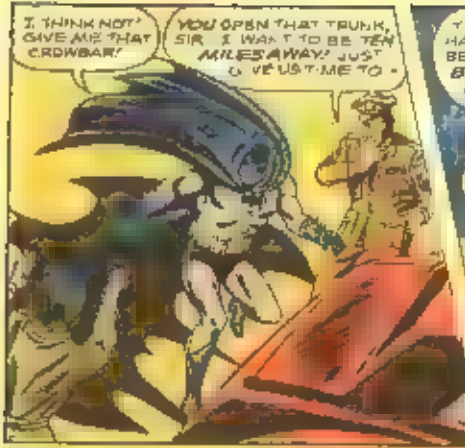
PUT THROUGH A CHECK ON THE OWNER OF THAT CAR OFFER. IT'S POSSIBLE HE DRIVER WAS USING AN ALIAS!

AND FRANTIC MOMENTS LATER

YOUR HUNCH WAS A HOT ONE. YE AH BATMAN! THIS CAR'S HOTTER'N MUST BE IN THE TRUNK! LET'S GET IT OPEN

THEY'RE BOOBY-TRAPPED!

BUT, BATMAN!



I THINK NOT! GIVE ME THAT CROWBAR!

YOU OPEN THAT TRUNK, SIR. I WANT TO BE TEN MILES AWAY! JUST GIVE ME TO -



I ME IS SOMETHING WE HAVE NOTHING OF DEGRANT BESIDES THE MAD BOMBER WE L - LET THIS THING BLOW UP

IF WE DON'T PAY THE RANSOM

CRASH!



IT'S YOUR BABY NOW, SGT. OWENS. REFUSE IT

IUS L K2 11 A77 THERE'S A NEW TAG ON T WHAT'S T SAY?

WARNING
ANY ATTEMPT TO
DEFUSE OR REMOVE
THIS WEAPON WILL
BE MET WITH INSTANT
RETALIATION!



INSTANT RETALIATION! WHEN THERE IT IS BOOBY TRAPPED OR

HE'S GOT A REMOTE CONTROL TO TRIGGER THIS OFF WHENEVER HE PLEASES!

THEN IF WE DON'T FIND HIM

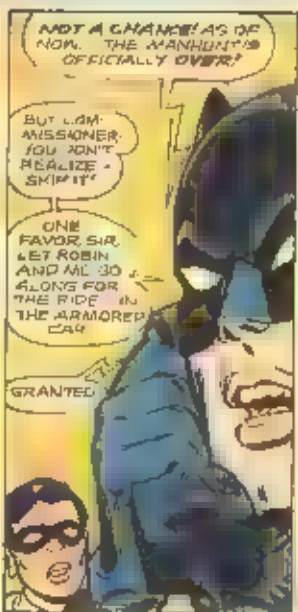
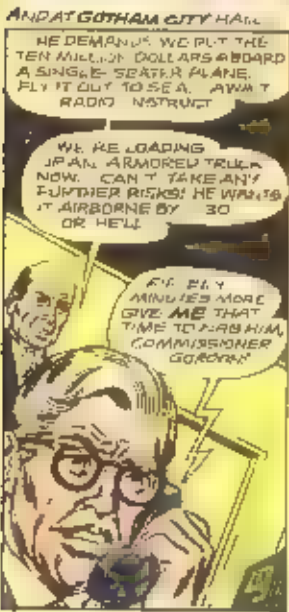
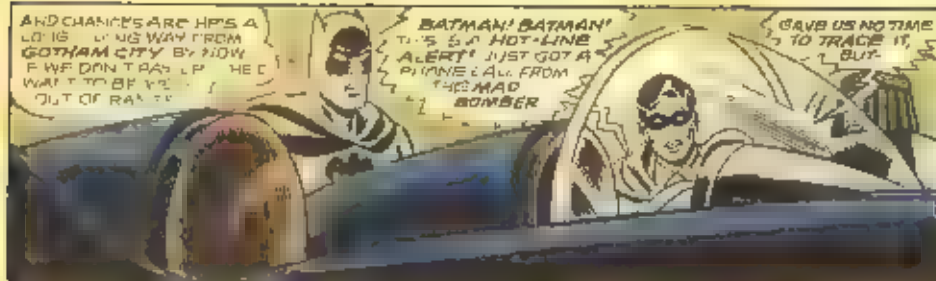


WE HAVE NO WAY OF DISARMING IT AND HE MUST HAVE THE REMOTE DEVICE ON HIS PERSON!

YES, SIR, BUT THE "OWNER" WILL DO YOU NO GOOD!

HAVE YOU TRACED THE OWNER?

OH-H... NO! THEN WE'VE COME TO THE END OF THE TRAIL!



AS THE LOADING STARTS

CIRCLE
AROUND THE
BACK ROBIN!
I'LL TAKE THE
SIDE HE MUST'VE
SEE US OR HE'LL
WANDER AND RUN

WINGMAN
6

JUST AS THE PLANE TAXIES INTO POSITION
FOR TAKE OFF

WHAT
WAS
THAT?

KLANG!
KLANG!

ALREADY BY
BATMAN'S
UN-ARMED
OIL CAN FUMBLE
THE BOMBER
SUATE HAS A
BOMB-FIGHTING
FOAM DISPENSER
FROM THE WALL AND

SLURP!

IN A PANG, THE TRAPPED TORMENTOR OF GOTHAM
CITY TURNS AND

YOU'LL NEVER
TAKE ME!

THEN BLINDLY RUNS OUT AS THE MONEY-
JET RETURNS FOR A TAKE-OFF INTO THE WIND

NEVER!



URSH... NO! RAN
RIGHT INTO THE
PATH OF--

DEAD OR NOT...
GOT TO GET THAT
REMOTE-CONTROL!



NOTHING...! NOTHING
ON HIM THAT RESEMBLES
A DEVICE!

HA... HA...



HAD EVERYTHING PLANNED
...TO THE LAST DETAIL!
REMOTE BOMB-TRIGGER
PLANTED IN... INNOCENT...
RUBBER BALL! YOU'LL
NEVER FIND... UHNN...

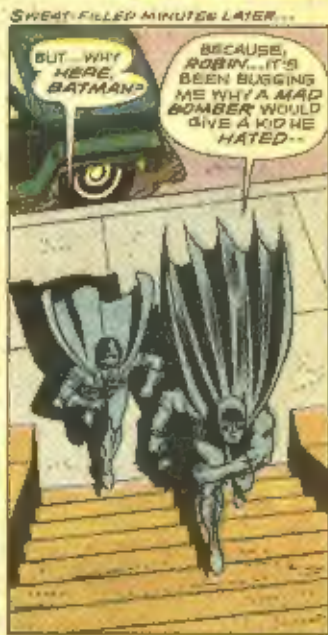
HE'S... DEAD!



WE'RE SUNK!
HE WAS GOING
TO DESTROY
GOTHAM
CITY...
ANYWAY!
AND WE
HAVE NO
WAY OF...

FINDING
THAT BALL
IN A CITY OF
EIGHT
MILLION?
I THINK WE
DO, ROBIN!

GIVE IT ALL SHE'S
GOT, DRIVER! WE'VE
GOT TO CALL OFF
A BALLGAME!



SWEAT-FILLED MINUTES LATER...

BUT... WHY
HERE,
BATMAN?

BECAUSE,
ROBIN... IT'S
BEEN BUGGING
ME WHY A MAD
BOMBER WOULD
GIVE A KID HE
HATED--



...A NEW BALL!
NOW I KNOW! IN
TWISTED REVENGE
HE WANTED THAT
KID TO BLOW UP
GOTHAM CITY!

W-WH...?
WHAT DO YOU
WANT--

YOUR BOY, SKINNY--
OR RATHER-- WHAT
HE HAS!

HEY... WIA' CHA
MEAN BUSTIN' IN
HERE? YOU'LL WAKE
SKINNAY!

IT'S A CHANCE
WE'VE GOT TO TAKE
OTHERWISE IT MIGHT
MEAN A PERMANENT
SLEEP FOR EVERYONE
IN GOTHAM CITY!

NOW TO
CUT THIS BALL
OPEN--FAST!



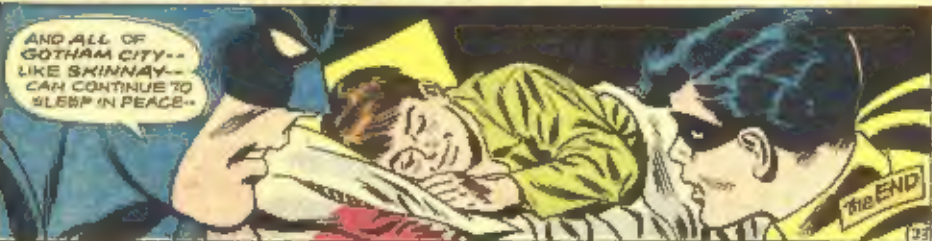
A SELF-WINDING
WATCH-TIMER...
WIRED TO A MICRO-
SIGNAL TRANS-
MITTER!

DIABOLICAL...
THE WINDER
HAD TO BE
KEPT IN
MOTION FOR
AT LEAST AN
HOUR TO TRIGGER
THE REMOTE-
BOMB!

AND WHAT BET-
TER WAY THAN
A BOUNCING
BALL?

NOW JUST
ONE SNIP...

AND ALL OF
GOTHAM CITY--
LIKE SKINNAY--
CAN CONTINUE TO
SLEEP IN PEACE--



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FACT FILE #1

TARANTULA appeared in **Star-Spangled Comics** from Issue No. 1 (October, 1941) through Issue No. 19 (April, 1943).

Although the adventures of Tarantula appeared in only nineteen stories, all of which were eight pages in length, he nevertheless remains one of the most fondly remembered costumed crime-fighters of the Golden Age of Comics. It is hard to explain exactly why Tarantula is so well remembered by the fans, because he certainly wasn't one of the major characters of the day. Perhaps it is because the readers recognized a potential in the character that was never allowed to reach fruition for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the War-time paper shortage. But idle speculation is not what this article is supposed to be about. Rather than trying to guess what might have been, we're here to tell you what kind of comic strip character Tarantula was.

Tarantula's origin story, which appeared in **Star-Spangled Comics** No. 1 was written by Mort Weisinger (now editor of **Superman**), and the art was by Hal Sharpe, the artist who was to illustrate the majority of the Tarantula strips. The origin tale's opening scene finds gang-leader Ace-Deuce and his criminal cohorts in the process of holding up a premiere-night theatre crowd. As the crooks are busily engaged in robbing both the cash receipts and the customers, a weirdly costumed character, descending from the ceiling on a thin silken strand, swoops down upon the felons. After a short and furious battle, the costumed newcomer has all the criminals ensnared in silken webs he has created with the strange gun he carries at his sides. When the police arrive and start asking questions, the web-spinner rushes off without answering their queries, thereby leaving the police to wonder whether or not he is a crime-fighter, or merely a crook working for some rival criminal gang.

Once alone, the masked man does the everyday garb of John Law, a writer of detective fiction. Returning home, he is met by his housekeeper, Olga, who excitedly shouts, "Mr. Law! You did it. The news came over the radio. 'Spider-Man', the announcer said, and, 'Tarantula' — the name you picked yourself!" Olga is the only other person to know that John Law is Tarantula.

After her initial outburst, Olga quiets down somewhat and asks if the mystery writer is finished playing games, and won't he get rid of that silly get-up now? In answer, John Law explains that he feels strongly that something must be done to stem the ever-growing crime wave, and, since he is always coming up with ingenious methods of crime-busting in his books, anyway, why not put some of those ideas to actual use? He further explains how he was inspired by observing his pet tarantula to design his equipment after it. (True, a tarantula is an offbeat kind of pet to keep, but then again, writers are an offbeat kind of people. . . . And anyone who would set out to be a costumed do-

gooder has just got to be a wee bit unusual to start with!) The crime-writer created a web-gun that shoots a liquid silk which solidifies into a variable type of webbing once it is fired from the weapon. He can use the instrument to quickly travel from place to place by swinging on its silken strands, or to weave webs in which he can trap his opponents. He has also devised suction cup devices for his feet and gloves, which enable him to walk on walls and ceilings. Once these inventions were perfected, he set out on his web-spinning, wall-crawling career.

His reflection is interrupted, however, when a radio-newsflash announces that Ace-Deuce and his gang have managed to escape from police custody, threatening to pull an especially spectacular theft. The scene now switches to the hideout of Ace-Deuce, the next day, where the master criminal is plotting one last super-crime before leaving the city for good. The plan is to steal the proceeds of a War Relief Party that is being held on the sixtieth floor of a skyscraper, but they will need the services of someone who can stall the elevators and allow them a clear get-away trail. Ace orders one of his henchmen to get Rags O'Bannion to do the job, and that evening, the robbery gets under way. However, Rags O'Bannion turns out to be Tarantula, in disguise. Tarantula makes quick work of subduing the criminals and, following a wild roof-top battle, he manages to thwart Ace-Deuce's escape by autogiro (a forerunner of today's helicopters).

That, in essence, was Tarantula's first excursion into crime-busting. Although there weren't very many more adventures in store for the spider-man, he did manage to combat and defeat an assortment of villains including The Crime Candle, The Blade, and The Fly, in his short but memorable career. And memorable is the word for Tarantula!



LETTERS TO BATCAVE

Dear Editor: Batman 204 brought with it quite a surprise! I mean, of course, the surprising quality of that issue. When it was announced that Batman would be given to another artist and writer team, I was dismayed. Never will Batman achieve the pinnacle of greatness he was destined for, I thought. So I bought the August issue only out of sadistic curiosity to see how far Batman's come-down would be. I opened to the first page and was amazed, never did I think Irv Novick could illustrate so well. Joe Giella subdues Novick's scratchy inks; he is the perfect inker to compliment Irv's pencils!

Frank Robbins' writing talent was more than expected; in fact, "Operation: Blindfold" is more than I might expect from your ace, Gardner Fox! The reason was because Batman was once more returned to the element that he originated under — MYSTERY! Again, Batman became the detective with the cloak of secrecy around him. The past few years, he had degenerated into a gaudy awful gaudy super-hero, which was untrue to his original inception. But at last, the real Batman is back, thanks to Mr. Robbins! He filled his script with many interesting deductions by Batman, such as the one that proved the dead man blind. And he didn't resort to using a costumed villain, a "getaway" used by lesser writers. You know what I mean; they introduce a costumed villain, then the hero has a pow-zam battle with him, which leaves few pages for characterization and twists.

Yes, Batman 204 introduced a new era of Batman to all of concordia that will (or should, I might say) become the best since the Batman of the forties. Thanks again for bringing back the Batman of old — the TRUE Batman — Fred Herbeck, Yaphank, N.Y.

(One thing about our Batmans — they play fair! When we give out with a Batman "bomb", their return-moll-bombardment to us is nerve-racking! But when an issue is good, their letter-avalanche is heart-warming! The comments on Batman 204 were practically all in the same vein — indicating our "New-Old Look" is not in vain! — Editor)

Dear Editor: Batman 204 depicted the Caped Crusader as I like to see him: a figure of the night, relying not on pseudo-scientific devices but rather on his detective ability . . . and his fist! . . . under suspicion by the police, operating on his own . . . this is the kind of Batman I've been waiting for ever since the inception of the "New Look".

And to think that this long-awaited ideal Batman story came from the pen of the same person who was responsible for the recent two-issue Flash "Samurroids" fiasco! Frank Robbins supplied all the elements needed for the perfect Batman story: a night-time setting . . . plenty of action . . . a down-to-earth, realistic plot . . . a puzzling mystery . . . a minimum of puns . . . and, thank goodness, none of those absurd costumed villains prancing around! Even the narrative was written in that good old "pulp magazine" style so noticeable in the early Batman classics. It's all too seldom nowadays that we find captions to compare with . . . "Has it finally come to pass! Has the doughty defender of truth and justice met . . . the unconquerable foe?" That's true "Golden Age," man!

Of course, your new art team of Irv Novick and Joe Giella played an integral part in contributing to the

atmosphere of this story. They did a great job of realizing what was a most difficult script to do justice to, and their sight scenes were nothing less than superb!

Perhaps . . . hopefully . . . Batman 204 will be the beginning of another "New Look" . . . the one so many of us were anticipating four years ago. Please, don't disappoint us this time! — Gordon Flegg, Jr., Atlanta, Ga.

Dear Editor: Wonderful! I am, of course, referring to Batman 204, "Operation: Blindfold". I knew the issue would be a hit when I first saw the cover. It matched and surpassed my highest hopes.

Let's start our discussion with the cover. The very idea of Batman being mugged in a slummy area of Gotham arouses interest in the story instantly. But when you have it drawn in that marvelous style, you outdo yourselves. First, look at Batman. Having him be the only figure in natural colors is a good idea, since he, naturally, is the main figure. And that facial expression — pure fear! Beautiful! The over-sized upon, the dark green sky contrasted with the lighter shade of the ground, the absence of "sound", the overall darkness, and the bat-shadow on the fence, fading as it nears the ground, all combined to make this your best cover in a long time.

Now for the inside art. The new kind of splash page is an interesting idea. I like it. The art averaged to be great — Novick and Giella are Batman's men!

Story was great. An automatic aura of mystery was created since the action took place at night, for which Batman was made. The murder on the first page informed us that we weren't dealing with cheap stuff. Then we were immediately launched into the story by the mystery of the next page. We knew that the victim wasn't Batman . . . but what, then? As the story develops, so do more touches of genius, like: a mad villain, deep plots and counterplots, human interest (Commissioner Gordon's reaction to the supposed death of the World's Greatest Detective), a mystery, and Batman and Robin up to their respective necks in trouble.

In summing up, let me say that, besides being an obvious classic, this issue really restored my faith in human nature. After some of the horrors you've been handing out lately, it is truly refreshing to read an issue such as this. But, it all goes to prove one tried and true fact: DC is the greatest! — Frank Erwin, Toledo, Ohio

Dear Editor: Having never really liked Bob Kane's artwork (except prior to the sixties), the only Batman adventures I read were in Detective when Infantino still took pencil and brush in hand. But now that Infantino has gone to that great, happy editorial ground on the top floor, I remained Batman-less for many months. Out of sheer curiosity, I picked up Batman 204 to witness the new team of Robbins and Novick. And well, I was more than slightly surprised at the results and must apologize for ever doubting the DC Dynasty of Comics.

To be honest, I was almost scared when I heard that Robbins would write for Batman. The gambel slant used on The Flash did not seem to fit to Batman; nor would it ever. But again, I was pleased at the results. It's hard to criticize the first part of a two-part story, so I won't. Let's just say that there was enough intrigue, build-up of the plot and action to make me buy the next issue. And isn't that part of the purpose of a first episode in a continuing story? — Klaus Janeway, Bridgeport, Conn.

Address THE BATCAVE, National Periodicals, 575 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.